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## Estresse no cotidiano universitário: estratégias de enfrentamento de docentes da saúde

Everyday stress in the university: coping strategies of health teachers'

Estrés cotidiano en la universidad: estrategias de afrontamiento de profesores de área de salud

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** To investigate the stress coping strategies developed by teachers in the Center of Health Sciences of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte. **Method:** This is an exploratory, descriptive study with a qualitative approach. Data collection occurred from May 2013 to April/2012 with 37 teachers from semi-structured interviews, and the data were analyzed through content analysis, using the method of thematic analysis. **Results:** From the speech of teachers were structured the categories: "Leisure Activities"; "Admittedly scant leisure activities"; "Coping with stressful situations in the university environment"; "Perception and the need for change". **Conclusion:** It could be observed from this study that teachers identify stressful situations related to work and leisure activities to reduce tensions, which, however, they do not practice. It is suggested greater institutional support and individual commitment in developing strategies that promote the welfare of teachers.

**Descriptors:** Burnout; Occupational Health; Faculty.

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## RESUMO

**Objetivo:** Investigar as estratégias de enfrentamento ao estresse desenvolvidas pelos professores do Centro de Ciências da Saúde da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte. **Método:** Estudo exploratório, descritivo, com abordagem qualitativa. A coleta de dados ocorreu no período de abril de 2012 a maio de 2013 com 37 docentes a partir de entrevista semiestruturada, sendo os dados analisados através da Análise de Conteúdo, utilizando a modalidade da análise temática. **Resultados:** A partir das falas dos docentes, foram estruturadas as categorias “Atividades de lazer”; “Atividades de lazer reconhecidas escassas”; “Enfrentamento às situações estressantes no ambiente universitário”; e “Percepção da necessidade de mudança”. **Conclusão:** Foi possível perceber que os docentes identificaram situações estressantes relacionadas ao trabalho e elencaram atividades de lazer para redução das tensões, que, no entanto, não realizam. Sugere-se maior apoio institucional e comprometimento individual na elaboração de estratégias que promovam o bem-estar do trabalhador docente.

**Descritores:** Estresse Profissional; Saúde do Trabalhador; Docentes.

## RESUMEN

**Objetivo:** Investigar las estrategias de supervivencia desarrolladas por los maestros para evitar el estrés en el Centro de Ciencias de la Salud de Universidad Federal del Rio Grande del Norte. **Métodos:** Estudio exploratorio, descriptivo, con abordaje cualitativo. Los datos fueron recolectados a partir de mayo de 2013 hasta Abril/2012 con 37 profesores de entrevistas semi-estructuradas, y los datos analizados a través del análisis de contenido, utilizando el método de análisis temático. **Resultados:** En el discurso de los maestros se estructuraron las categorías: “Actividades de ocio”; “Actividades de ocio que reconocer escasos”; “El hacer frente a situaciones de estrés en el ámbito universitario”; “La percepción y la necesidad de cambio”. Conclusión: Se pudo observar en este estudio que los maestros a identificar las situaciones de estrés relacionados con el trabajo y las actividades de ocio enlecharan para reducir las tensiones, que sin embargo no se dan cuenta. Se sugiere un mayor apoyo institucional y el compromiso individual en el desarrollo de estrategias que promuevan el bienestar de los docentes.

**Descriptores:** Agotamiento Profesional; Salud Laboral; Docentes.

## INTRODUCTION

The term “stress” was first defined as an alert reaction of the body when facing with critical situations, triggering a syndrome that is the widespread effort to adapt to new conditions, known as the General Adaptation Syndrome, made up of the alarm stage, resistance, and exhaustion.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, with the stress triggered by critical circumstances imposed by internal or environmental stimuli, it can be said that the changes in modern society can be considered important, stressful events, particularly the changes related to the professional level. The intensification of the work pace, the worsening competitiveness and the search for higher levels of productivity are some of those features relevant to the new settings outlined in the workplace<sup>2</sup>, to increase the charges imposed on workers, causing stress and illness.

Therefore, these new labor requirements are also present in the university environment. In this context, teachers

are susceptible to the stresses generated by the constant responsibility inherent in the teaching-learning process.<sup>3</sup> In particular, the health of teachers experiences a greater possibility of stress, because of the need to promote both student learning and care to the user, respecting all ethical issues involved in this process. The commitment to the safety of students and the population served demand teacher presence and constant attention, especially in complex and high-risk situations, increasing the demands of work and favoring wear.<sup>3</sup>

In this perspective, it is essential to develop coping mechanisms to stressful situations emerging from the process of teacher's health, both in personal and institutional level.

However, it is still observed little mobilization in this direction, making it necessary to warn and question these professionals regarding the use of forward strategies to negative situations emerging in the workplace, so to enhance and promote their quality of life, justifying the relevance of this study.

Therefore, given that the work of health educators is permeated of generating components and wear that if they are not adequately confronted, they can cause illness, the question is: what are the stress coping strategies adopted by the Health Sciences Center (HSC) of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN)? This study aims to investigate the stress coping strategies developed by HSC teachers of UFRN.

## METHODS

This is an exploratory, descriptive study, with a qualitative approach. This type of research describes a situation by an observation in a given space - time addressing four aspects: description, registration, analysis, and interpretation of current phenomena.<sup>4</sup> The qualitative approach applies to the study of history, representations, beliefs, opinions, allowing understand the experiences of individuals, considering their singularities and the context in which they are inserted<sup>5</sup>.

Data collection occurred at the Health Sciences Centre (HSC) of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN), from April 2012 to February 2013. The sample was obtained from the random selection of the population components each HSC department, through Microsoft Excel XP software, consisting of 37 teachers. Inclusion criteria were selected teachers working in HSC and at least six (06) months of work at the institution. Exclusion criteria corresponded to those who have not been active in the period of data collection due to vacation, medical or maternity leave and clearance for masters or doctorate. It is important to note that this study sets a cut of a more comprehensive research project.

The collection was carried out through a semi-structured interview, based on the following question: “What do you usually do to ease the stress situations?”. The speeches were

documented in an mp4 player for later transcription in its fullness.

Data were analyzed using Bardin's content analysis, using the method of thematic analysis in three distinct stages: pre-analysis, with the intense reading of the interviews; material exploration and text clipping into thematic units for analysis of the formulated categories and the interpretation and discussion of results.<sup>6</sup>

Analysis of the interviews led to the development of four (04) distinct categories, which are: 1) Recreational activities; 2) Admittedly scarce leisure activities (with subcategories: 2.1) Difficulties in untying from work, 2.2) Freedom strategies in extra work environment, and 2.3) Pleasurable activities, but little practiced); 3) Coping with stressful situations in the university environment (subdivided into: 3.1) Dealing with stress during lectures, 3.2) Minimizing stress during practical classes, 3.3) Attitudes to difficulties in interpersonal relationships; and 4) Perception of the need for change, as the latter category.

This study is based on Resolution 196/96, revised by Resolution 466/2012 of the National Ministry of Health Council as regards human beings research, and was held with the approval by the Ethics and Research Committee (CEP) of the UFRN through the protocol number 0287.0.51.000-11. The anonymity of the participants was ensured by the use of the letter "D" followed by a cardinal number for the quote of the speeches.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Regarding the profile of the subject from the collected data, most participants were female (54%); aged between 30 and 40 years old (56%); married (75%); with Ph.D. (72%), with more than ten years of training (81%); moreover, most have 40-hour working regime (83%) and teaching in undergraduate and specialization (72%).

Facing stress corresponds to the set of strategies adopted by individuals to suit the adverse situations that interfere with their balance. Therefore, the coping responses should occur to terminate or alter stressors to get the psychosocial adaptation of the individual, promoting an improvement in their quality of life.<sup>7</sup>

When teachers were faced with certain situations and demands of the work environment and its consequent implications in everyday life, they develop some mechanisms to deal with the facts, reducing the feelings of tension and wear.

## LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Coping ways to deal with the stressful situations practiced by teachers surveyed are diverse and include cultural, religious, rest, physical exercise, among others. Nurses showed in research<sup>8</sup> using leisure activities, relaxation,

being with the family and the appreciation of extra-work environment as ways of dealing with stress.

In Table 1, there are some leisure strategies used by health teachers, such as nurses, as coping strategies to wear experienced by everyday situations.

**Table 1** – Leisure activities carried out by HSC in the UFRN

LEISURE STRATEGIES	TEACHERS
cultural activities (movies, TV shows, readings, music, etc.)	D1, D3, D5, D7, D10, D11, D18, D20, D21, D22, D24, D26, D30, D36
Religion activities	D1, D12, D28, D37
Relaxation activities and rest	D1, D6, D7, D11, D18, D20, D24, D27, D34
Physical exercises	D4, D5, D8, D9, D10, D11, D13, D15, D17, D19, D23, D25, D26, D28, D35, D36, D37
Activities with family and friends	D2, D5, D6, D7, D10, D11, D13, D14, D16, D17, D19, D20, D21, D22, D23, D24, D27, D28, D30, D33, D34, D35, D37
Workload reduction/ spend more time at home	D11, D15, D17, D20, D27, D34

Most teachers reported like to watch movies, TV shows, listen to music, read, among other cultural practices. Social activities also are cited by participants as promoters of their leisure and well-being, notably participation in religious rites, cultivating spirituality, and living with family and friends, strengthening emotional bonds.

In this sense, the family environment has a major influence in reducing the feeling of emotional exhaustion, so some teachers try to spend more time at home in the course of their daily tasks. Other professionals prefer to enjoy their free time to rest, which is now considered necessary relaxation after the hard work routine.

Also, teachers recognize the effects of physical exercise on promotion and maintenance of physical and psychological health, and many of them used this beneficial strategy.

## Admittedly scarce leisure activities

Teachers report that, in their routine, they have little free time, and these few moments they are still busy thinking about work.

Professional practice is so linked to the teaching so that it becomes difficult for them to have other experiences disengaging completely from their professional life, which hinders their full participation in moments of relaxation since they are permanently connected to situations and problems arising the profession.

Many activities taken as pleasurable cease to be carried out at the expense of fulfillment of work functions that go beyond the physical university environment, thus compromising the quality of life of the teaching job.

It should be noted that, in health teaching-learning process, they also experience situations that have a positive impact on the professional quality of life, such as working with young people and promoting healing of the patients, as there are satisfactory interactions with students, population, and coordination of the course, providing pleasure and personal achievements.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the work should not be seen only as a cause of wear, but also as a source of pleasure.

### Difficulties in untying from work

The excess of assignments that permeate the teaching work process hinder to carry out leisure activities, since the time that should be free ends up being occupied by backlogs of work.

This creates a concern in teachers that even outside of their professional practice, they remain thinking of their obligations, as reported by the following teachers:

*"The teacher cannot disentangle the teachers' job, so, I would say that we worked before, during and after this teaching process (...). So, I would say that there are few, very few, moments that I can be... not thinking of the teaching process (...). Very few [leisure activities], but you do not relax, you're on the beach thinking of projects, guidance on subjects on how to solve something or other (...)." (D8)*

*"The truth is that no matter how many times we are not in the classroom, we will not turn off the activities, due to the large amount of things you have to do." (D32)*

The work overload, which requires teachers to take academic activities beyond the university environment, has a negative impact on their quality of life because they are unable to overcome stress in the institution, extrapolate for the home and other environments social feelings of anxiety and concern.<sup>3</sup> From the clippings presented, it is remarkable that this impact occurs mainly in the mental aspect, which may cause wear.

Due to the excessive activities, weekends, and days off become the only free time to carry out the various tasks accumulated during the hectic workdays, as exemplified below:

*"(...) When I'm not here in person, I'm at home making millions of other types of activity. (...) I try to rest, but often work activities come home, and then we have to make-do what you could not do during the week, like reading scientific papers, (...) and it ends up involving your weekend." (D31)*

In this process, the personal and family life of professional are also affected, since the time that should be dispensed in the cultivation of personal relationships is sacrificed due to the fulfillment of academic assignments, as shown below:

*"At the weekend, I'm with a lot of accumulated tasks of the university, I will go to the computer, then my husband complains, it has affected up to my marriage, why? Because I have to do everything, I have deadlines (...)." (D36)*

The difficulties in reconciling professional and emotional life are striking, especially in the professional female, due to the accumulation of roles. They experience higher levels of occupational stress related to overwork, career development, and family problems.<sup>9</sup> Thus, it is observed that the difficulty in extricating from academic obligations is a present reality in the lives of teachers, affecting their family and social life, and causing constant concern, which can lead to mental strain.

### Freedom strategies in extra work environment

By not having a specific time for lesson planning, guidance, correction of tests and activities, among other things, teachers report performing these tasks at home. As a way to derail this workload in the home, a teacher chose to take home the means to do so, and mentioned:

*"You know what did I do? At home, I have no computer or Internet." (D17)*

The pleasant coexistence between those who share the same working environment provides the well-being and personal motivation of the professionals. However, the failure to distinguish leisure time with colleagues as occasion dissipation of concerns and experienced tensions over the daily journey, bringing up labor in hours of fun, it was considered a negative factor for teachers:

*"We have enough friends here at work, but lately, we try not to meet with friends from work because sometimes you're in a barbecue and people start to discuss things of our job." (D11)*

Considering the importance of good relationships between the pairs to reduce the stress level in the academic environment, it is desirable to seek closer ties collegiality, seeking to emphasize not only aspects of the profession during times of coexistence.

Thus, it is up to teachers to develop ways to promote their rest, at home, as well as enhance the interaction spaces with colleagues to promote a healthy collective space.

## Pleasurable activities, but little practiced

One respondent has listed some activities considered pleasurable, but they are not done for various reasons, ranging from physiological impediments, security and time availability:

*"So, we have attempted, but the operation is difficult. I stopped going to the movies, the beach; I am going at least every two weeks, right? I'm not going every weekend. I stopped playing ball because I got hurt and could not play anymore, I stopped going to the stadium to see my team playing because of the violence, I'm not going, I'm watching at home, then at least I haven't yet abdicated watching a game at home; and walk, when I have time I walk at night to relax." (D8)*

By allowing that several variables are put ahead of relaxation options listed, the respondent fails to meet their leisure and wellness needs.

For some teachers, the fact that they cannot take care is also a key of stress. Even though health professionals, fail to develop healthy practices in their daily lives, justified by the demand of academic tasks.<sup>3</sup>

Some teachers, when asked to describe the occupations they like, said that they practice them a few times, as in the cases reported below.

*"One thing I like that we have not done is (...) go out to the pub at night, stay there listening to the band, having a beer, enjoying the show, we like enough, but we have done it a little." (D11)*

*"I love to dance (...), do some steps, do those pirouettes. That for me is fantastic; it makes me happy! Now it's one thing I've been doing very little (...)." (D15)*

*"Three things I love to do: go to the beach, traveling, I like to movies a lot, chatting, hanging out with friends and everything. But then, I've neglected it, right? So they always go to the background (...)." (D9)*

Respondents point to a series of activities that although beneficial to them, are relegated to the background. Survey of health teachers revealed that lack of time is a stressor that affects the quality of life of these professionals as a whole.<sup>3</sup> Thus, it is important the perception of the need to reorganize their time, giving space to tasks that have a positive impact on their welfare.

The demands of work, meeting deadlines and schedules leave little time to perform other tasks during teachers' routine, as it is explicated in the following statement:

*"I love to travel, but I am not traveling (...). Now it's not working, but when I'm on vacation, I do readings of my area. (...) As I know, I'm already going to another phase, so I got involved with ballroom dancing... But then I had to leave because of the working hours, I was getting very late and missing part of the class (...)." (D10)*

Thus, the way the work has been organized needs to be reviewed with modifying activities that promote well-being with measures that begin in the institution and to improve working conditions.<sup>10</sup>

It is also necessary that the professional dispense more attention to aspects of their welfare, choosing and performing their personal priorities, not allowing the work to limit all their available time.

## Coping with stressful situations in the university environment

In the teaching environment, teachers are faced with stressful events from the attitudes of students and colleagues, the demands of work, and the structure of the institution.

Thus, it is necessary to develop and use coping strategies not to harm the various stressors present in the school and learn to apply them in different situations experienced during the professional practice.

## Coping with stress: during lectures

To cope with stressful situations that occur in the environment of lectures, mostly related to some collaborative attitudes of students (such as inattention, use of electronic devices, among others), teachers use different strategies.

These alternatives developed by teachers to teach classes in the face of situations of non-learning, bad student behavior, fatigue or malaise, as well as promoting learning, are also coping and escape from stress.<sup>11</sup>

In this sense, the teaching professionals mobilize their intelligence and resources at their disposal to find creative solutions to enable the development of their teaching activities, for their positive and satisfactory results.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, some teachers mentioned the use of different methodologies such as easing of class scripts and attempts to draw attention of the student, reported the following:

*"One of the alternatives I have used very often is to change the class script, objectives, goals and try to review that program, including if necessary return to class next time (...)." (D8)*

*"Sometimes I change the voice to try and pull their attention, sometimes I question students who are inattentive, to try and pull their attention back to the class (...)." (D22)*

Seeking these ways to address situations of difficulties in teaching classes, teachers demonstrate to be attentive and committed to effective learning by the students.

Another way to resume the focus of attention of the student to the class is the use of the frequency list, as set by the following teacher:

*"When I see that the group is playing a little, I say: 'people, I will give you the most important part of the class, which is the frequency list!' And usually, no one has gone out yet. (...) Sometimes they even understand it as a joke and we go there in a friendly atmosphere trying to discuss things." (D11)*

Thus, the teacher seeks to avoid hassles or even the creation of an unfavorable affective climate.<sup>11</sup> The teacher faces situations through flexible attitudes, using negotiation to resolve conflicts that arise in this context.

On the other hand, the attitudes of students considered unwanted by teachers, are standard procedures as using verbal warnings.<sup>11</sup> One of the teachers, considering the maturity of the university, invites the students to leave the classroom if they are hindering the process of teaching and learning, which is exemplified in the following lines:

*"(...) If there are students speaking, I deal with it, I am a person who commands to shut up if they need to shut up, you know?" (D7)*

*"(...) I just call their attention when they're exaggerating, and if necessary, ask for the student to leave the room and I continue my class as usual because I think the university students are all adults who attend the class because they want to." (D23)*

The speeches denote intransigence traits about inappropriate student behavior, to the extent that these teachers seek to solve the problems through authoritarian attitudes.

Thus, teachers in their way develop coping mechanisms to handle stressful situations in the school environment facing them.

### Minimizing stress: during practical classes

Local practical classes usually are presented as a challenge for the teacher. The fact of exercising care activities during the practical teaching of students causes a combination of stressors elements<sup>12</sup> due to setbacks structural character, management students and mediation with other professionals working in health services where these activities occur.

Teachers seek dialogue and interact with the supporting staff working in the local internships and practical classes, on

the premise that maintaining a good relationship with these professionals has a positive impact on the learning process of the university student:

*"We always seek to have a good dialogue, an opening with the students. And we have, in most training places, a good relationship with supervisors, due to time already worked. We advocate always dialoguing, calling, going on site to try and remedy these conflicts." (D28)*

*"And another important thing is to seek to build an interaction with the staff there from the hospital, which favors because they also participate in the school, I participate in the care, and we share a little this responsibility. It would also be an attitude that I've taken." (D9)*

In fact, establishing and maintaining dialogue, striving for a good relationship, seeking mutual help of colleagues and trying to resolve conflicting situations are strategies used by health professionals to face stressful circumstances at the workplace.<sup>8</sup>

Regarding the attitudes of students, a teacher chooses not to be compassionate to postures demonstrated by the students before the patients seen in practice courts, confronting them, as shown below:

*"(...) If he does not respect my patient, (...) then I give that sermon: 'These patients are here telling their intimacy to you for you to learn. It is absurd that you are not paying attention to it. It's not respectful.'" (D21)*

Some strategies used by health workers to reduce tensions in the workplace include acting with warmth and respect for patients, families and staff, and assist the patient with technical quality and humanized manner.<sup>8</sup> Thus, these attitudes are necessary to apprentices and should be requested by teachers.

The time of practical activity provides students with the health experience, even at graduation, which is to be professional. In this sense, it is essential that it presents an ethical and humane posture with the patients, and it is up to the teacher to supervise and direct this time to direct academic interaction with the patient, seeking to instill in the first the desired attitude. By alerting the student, the teacher confronts the stressful situation to solve it, and reassuring to know that fulfilled its educational role.

### Attitudes to difficulties in interpersonal relationships

One of the points most stressful in the workplace is the relationship with peers and other people involved in the work

process. Addressing situations and defensive attitudes, there are resources that can be used to search for healthy living at work.<sup>11</sup> In this context, teachers develop different strategies to overcome the conflicting situations.

One of the means used to deal with the stress generated by relationship difficulties at work is psychotherapy:

*"(...) I just do not undergo therapy with the pettiness of others [referring to co-workers] (...)." (D5)*

The professional maturity is indicated by another teacher as a way to manage more appropriately the internal tensions that arise from relational problems:

*"Today I'm sure I'm able to take it and overcome much better than before, when I first entered the university. I got no sleep, I was stressed, worried that I should have said this or that at the meeting, why did I not speak. So, I was charging me. Not today, today I am calmer and surer of my activities, and this is no problem for me. Disagreements are regarded as normal because we are in the collective, and dissenting opinions are normal and even welcome." (D8)*

In fact, health workers mention the length of professional experience as a determining factor for adequate coping with stressful situations at work, because the experiences confer the ability to keep calm in adversity, enabling problem-solving.<sup>13</sup>

Many individuals are not affected by the problems that arise at work, they are not responsible for them and do not seek solutions to preserve their physical and psychological integrity.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, many teachers assume a separation from the conflicting situations, as exemplified in the following cuts:

*"But usually I avoid it when I enter a confrontation zone, I hold back and I'd rather not move, I retreat? (...) Depending at times I give the necessary response, I face if you do me a right harassment, if you make me a critique that I do not agree, it is natural that I will not react well, it happens, as in any environment that you are there it is because people are different (...)." (D6)*

*"No, I see problems, I do not get involved, because well... I've had problems in the past, like, relationship, for example, it stressed me a lot (...)." (D16)*

These defensive strategies will be promoting health as the energy from these stresses is directed to something socially productive. Otherwise, the persistence in using this tactic can lead to psychosomatic illness.<sup>11</sup> Failure to meet these

conditions may be leading these respondents to accumulate these tensions, causing harm to their psychological health.

Exhausted workers who lack the support or trust of co-workers are compelled to seek their resources to deal with problems at work, which increases stress and creates suffering. On the other hand, professionals not exhausted seek the assistance of the working team to solve their problems collectively.<sup>13</sup> The existence of a support system within the institution is required to assist teachers in the management and resolution of relational conflicts effectively.

## Perceived need for change

The excessive burden of work activities combined with the demands and requirements inherent in teaching, force these teachers to postpone the implementation of plans and goals that have repercussions directly in improving their quality of life.

Some of these goals relate to a greater dedication to certain aspects of the personal life that were being continuously ignored, as in the case of this teacher:

*"Two years ago I moved to a new apartment, I was happy about it and everything, and I haven't had the time to unpack yet, right? (...) This next year I want to devote myself a little more to my personal life, right?" (D5)*

Professionals reflect on the improvement of their quality of life, and claim to be seeking actions to remedy this need, according to the following statements:

*"I'm already reflecting and trying to improve my time to filter some things, to try and have a better quality of life, now my quality of life is compromised." (D13)*

*"(...) But it is a goal that I have in me: to value and create opportunities and take advantage of the recreational opportunities that I'm... admittedly negligent about it. Anyway." (D9)*

In addition to compromising the physical health, the excessive and continuous stress has an effect on the quality of life of individuals, so the methods for reduction are of great importance.<sup>14</sup>

It is explicit in the speech of teachers that free time for recreational activities does not meet their needs, indicating a willingness to take more care of this aspect of their daily lives, as explained below:

*"(...) I do not go to the hairdresser; I do my nails at home when I have time... taking care of plants, flirt, make food, I have no food because I do not have time to make food... playing with animals, tidying drawers, my house is a*



*mess... I think what I do will have to change; I know I will have to change.” (D1)*

Evaluating the search for quality of life from the perspective of coping strategies developed by health care teachers, it is highlighted the need to implement programs that promote the physical, psychological and mental professionals<sup>14</sup>, acting properly in reducing the factors that generate tension and wear.

## CONCLUSIONS

From this study, it was possible to denote that the health teachers identified stressful situations present in their daily lives, and they listed a number of practices (such as participating in cultural, religious and social activities, rest and reduce the workload) that, when performed, can reduce tension and wear arising from academic obligations.

However, these teachers reported that they often fail to do the listed activities at the expense of compliance backlogs of work, as these go beyond the hours of operation at the university, entering the domestic space and thereby removing the time it should be intended for rest and leisure.

About the learning environment, whether theoretical or practical, the professionals used strategies to minimize the tensions that arise during the learning process. When problems are related to inattention or some collaborative attitudes of students, teachers reported to modify the lesson plan, change the tone, giving the frequency list and make verbal warnings, as ways to overcome these adversities. Already in the practice fields, such attitudes were to promote dialogue with the health team and collection of ethical attitudes of academics.

Regarding the difficulties in interpersonal relationships, positions were observed as the distance before the conflictive situations, no involvement with them, besides the search for help through psychotherapy. These escape mechanisms can be effective to overcome short-term problems, but they are not the most effective alternative to its resolution.

Thus, it is apparent that the coping strategies used by respondents to stress teachers need more attention and institutional support, and greater individual commitment to operationalize attitudes that promote good physical and mental of these workers. It is important to note that the survey was conducted investigating a specific reality, making it necessary further work to get more comprehensive results.

The study identified stressful situations present in the daily work of teachers and made them reflect about the mechanisms that develop them to reduce wear. However, it was not possible to provide the subject effective activities for coping with stress, which is a limitation of the research.

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